

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5042

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: SEDU, PE

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY FACULTY PRESSES FOR SALARY INCREMENT

1. THE FACULTY OF THE NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY AT LA MOLINA, WHICH MRS. ROSALYNN CARTER IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT DURING THE PERUVIAN LEG OF HER LATIN AMERICAN TOUR, RECENTLY AGREED IN A UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY TO STRIKE FOR A SALARY INCREASE. THE GOP RESPONDED QUICKLY AND FAVORABLY TO THE TEACHERS' DEMANDS AND THE THREAT OF A STRIKE NOW SEEMS REMOTE. THE TEACHERS' ATTITUDE, UNUSUAL AND SOMEWHAT AUDACIOUS IN VIEW OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IMPOSED BY THE GOP IN JUNE 1976, IS A REFLECTION OF THE SEVERE FISCAL CRISIS WHICH PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES ARE NOW EXPERIENCING AND THE EXTREME FRUSTRATION FELT BY UNDER-PAID PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION. THE "BRAIN DRAIN" OF PERUVIAN INTELLECTUALS AND SCIENTISTS, WHILE DIFFICULT TO QUANTIFY, APPEARS TO BE HAVING A PARTICULARLY DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES AND IS A SOURCE OF CONCERN TO THE PERUVIAN UNIVERSITY COUNCIL (CONUP), WHICH FORMULATES POLICY FOR AND ADMINISTERS ALL NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES. THE RECTOR OF THE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY, IN A RECENT LETTER TO "EL COMERCIO", DEFENDED THE FACULTY DECISION TO STRIKE, CITING THE LACK OF RECOGNITION AND STIMULATION FOR INTELLECTUAL AND SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT, AS WELL AS THE DIFFICULT PERSONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS WHICH

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FORCES THEM TO ABANDON TEACHING AND EVEN LEAVE PERU IN SEARCH OF GREENER PASTURES.

2. IN RESPONSE TO WHAT COULD HAVE BECOME A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CONUP ANNOUNCED AN ACROSS THE BOARD WAGE INCREASE FOR ALL TEACHERS IN PERUVIAN UNIVERSITIES IN A PRESS CONFERENCE ON MAY 27. THE EFFECTIVE DATE FOR

THE INCREASES, WHICH FOR FULL-TIME TEACHERS WOULD BE 25 PERCENT OF CURRENT SALARIES, WAS NOT ANNOUNCED.

3. COMMENT. SINCE THE STATE OF EMERGENCY TOOK EFFECT THE GOP HAS FORCEFULLY PUT DOWN ECONOMICALLY-MOTIVATED STRIKES OR THREATS OF STRIKES BY MUNICIPAL AND TRANSPORT WORKERS, FISHERMEN AND MINERS. THE GOP'S POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE THREAT OF A STRIKE BY UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS DEMONSTRATES OFFICIAL AWARENESS OF THE DETRIMENTAL LONG-TERM EFFECT OF UNCOMPETITIVE SALARY SCALES ON NATIONAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT. IT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY THE NEGATIVE EFFECT ON PERU'S IMAGE THAT A STRIKE AT THE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY WOULD HAVE HAD AT A TIME WHEN WORLD ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON LIMA AND THE CAMPUS AT LA MOLINA.
DEAN

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